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THE NEW FOREST.

IN the course of an excursion lately in the south of England, I thought of visiting the New Forest in Hampshire. One of my pleasant memories of that sylvan piece of country carried me back five-and-thirty years, during which period changes of various kinds were said to have taken place, and, to judge from newspaper discussions, still greater changes were in contemplation. So, to see the Forest once more, I bent my way by steamer from Cowes in the Isle of Wight to Southampton, and thence, instead of railway transit, preferred to roll forward in a westerly direction in an open carriage, to Lyndhurst, the capital of the Forest, if capital it can be said to have. The distance was ten miles, and as the day was fine, there was a prospect of enjoying the fresh air and sunshine.

Getting free of the old fortified walls of Southampton, and of lines of modern villas, we pursue a rather commonplace route, until, the country becoming more open and natural in appearance, we glide without any perceptible boundary into the realms of the Forest. Historically, the district is interesting. As is well known, it was appropriated by William the Conqueror, and set apart by him as a royal hunting-ground, under the peculiar restrictions of the Norman forest laws; it being chosen for this purpose from its neighbourhood to the royal residence at Winchester. What were the original dimensions of the tract of country so selected, we are nowhere satisfactorily told, but are led to suppose that the Forest was at least sixty miles in circumference. To render it suitable for the chase, it is alleged that the country was laid waste, its villages, churches, and hamlets rooted out, and the inhabitants driven away; and further, that William either planted the district with trees, or added to the woods already growing on the spot. There may be a general truth in the statements regarding the process of desolation, but doubts arise as to the wholesale planting or to the extension of the woods. The original meaning of the term *forest*, was a *frith* or wild piece of country, set

aside for field-sports. In the old chronicles this particular forest is designated 'a mickle deer-frith.' There were in it, no doubt, tracts covered with trees of an ancient date, but as we shall immediately point out from personal observation, there were likewise comprehended huge stretches of ground on which nothing would grow but gorse or heather, and which for any useful purpose were almost as valueless as the sands of the desert. We are, therefore, to understand that at no time was the land in the New Forest wholly covered with growing timber; that it was only woody here and there, with bare and barren intervals, miles in breadth, which yielded no shelter to the beasts of the chase. A similar condition of things is known to have pertained to nearly all the old royal forests in England and Scotland. They were simply wild pieces of country, with patches of trees and bushes, amidst which the game found a harbourage; while the open spaces, like the inclosed fields of modern days, offered no obstacle to the onward sweep of mounted huntsmen.

Whatever was the original extent of the 'mickle deer-frith,' it was destined to suffer encroachment and diminution, but without, till the present time, suffering a material change of character. Assuming its primary size as being sixty-six thousand three hundred acres, as many as twenty-five thousand acres have been granted or sold as manors or freehold estates, nine hundred acres are the encroachments of squatters, a thousand acres are held on leases from the crown, and upwards of eleven thousand acres are inclosures round the keepers' lodges. Such is a common computation, which we do not attempt to verify. All we can say is, that the New Forest, as now seen on travelling through it, is a jumble of three or four varieties of land—inclosed estates with gentlemen's mansions, differing in no respect from ordinary private properties, as regards division of fields, farm-steadings, gate lodges, and ornamental parks; petty inclosures connected with detached cottages and hamlets; ground protected by fences for rearing plantations of young firs; tracts with old timber; and open heaths. These last two kinds of property are for

the most part unfenced, and to all appearance are free to the rambles of pedestrians, and professional visits of artists. The public roads penetrating the Forest in different directions are a remarkable feature. Made of a reddish flinty material dug from gravel-pits, they are smooth and excellently kept, are free from the nuisance of toll-bars, and pursue long lines as straight as an arrow. Driving along these admirable highways, you feel as if journeying through well-kept pleasure-grounds; and as the land is generally undulating, with occasionally knolls or low hills covered with wood, the scenery is far from being devoid of the picturesque.

By one of these straight roads we reach Lyndhurst, a village consisting of a row of brick houses, two stories high, on each side of the road, with the parish church occupying the summit of a knoll on the west, and the pointed spire of which is seen for miles distant. The inhabitants are perhaps a thousand in number, most of them following the trades required by the neighbourhood. We can hardly imagine a place more primitive. Its few shops are of a compound character. The baker deals in stationery, the grocer sells carpets, and the chemist has a fair show of drapery and photographs. There is no bookseller or news-vendor, and no bank for general accommodation in money matters. The town, to call it so, has no gas-lamps, not even oil-lamps for lighting the thoroughfare. Water is not led on to the houses, and there is no system of sewage. Yet we see nothing offensive. On the contrary, all is rural, simple, and attractive. The windows of the humblest dwellings are draped with white curtains, and in the whole of them we are gratified with the sight of rows of flowering plants growing in pots, which is at least a good sign of popular tastes and habits. Little seems to be doing. The only conspicuous object in the usually dull street is a public pump. Obviously, the place is under some deadening official influence, which restricts its improvement and keeps it poor; and of this I heard some complaints. In the vicinity, there are some dwellings of a superior order. To strangers, the great defect of Lyndhurst is the want of proper accommodation. Only with difficulty did I find a roof under which to put my head, in a very small inn of the old-fashioned sort. This deficiency is to be regretted, for the climate is delightful, and Lyndhurst forms an excellent starting-point for excursions to the different scenes of interest in the Forest, and I have no doubt that, were convenient lodgings to be obtained, the place would become a favourite resort for summer visitors.

It would be worth any one's while to visit Lyndhurst, if it were only to see an exceedingly beautiful work of art in the parish church. This building, which was erected only a few years ago to supersede a mean decayed edifice on the spot, is constructed of brick of divers colours, in a handsome Gothic style, and cost, as I was told, about fourteen thousand pounds, which sum was

raised by public subscription. The object of interest just referred to consists of a fresco-painting on the east end of the chancel, stretching from side to side over the communion-table, somewhat in the character of a *reredos*. It is the work of F. Leighton, R.A., and was munificently presented by him to the church. The subject is illustrative of the parable of the ten virgins. The central figure, Christ, meek and radiant in a white robe, has on the right the five watchful virgins in different attitudes, with their lamps blazing; while on the left are the five negligent virgins, abashed and sorrowful, with their lamps extinct. Certain figures of angels are introduced to bring out the full sentiment of the design. To aid the perspective, the scene represented is in a species of portico, with slender pillars in the foreground. Advancing up the nave of the church, we are startled with the life-like and truthful character of this marvellous wall-painting. Its soft richness of colouring, its beauty, its fine drawing and grouping, rivet attention, and after enjoying the sight of it, one draws himself away with a feeling of regret. I confess to having gone to the church on Sunday very much with the view of having another look at Mr Leighton's exquisite production; but otherwise had reason to be satisfied, for the service was well conducted and edifying. The fresco has been successfully photographed by Mr J. G. Short, Lyndhurst. I brought away a copy.

Settled down in a quiet retreat, I was soon fortunate in discovering that Mr Judd, the intelligent postmaster, kept for hire a horse and wagonette, which, with himself as driver, were at my disposal. The very thing I wanted. The means of driving about the Forest, with one who was able to afford some local information, came quite readily to hand. For several days, therefore, I am to be considered as sallying forth in quest of scenes interesting to the tourist; sometimes driving along those wonderfully straight highways, sometimes quitting the main routes and getting into cross-roads which wound among the lofty trees, where, for mile after mile, not a human being or any living creature was visible—nothing but the grandeur of nature and a tremendous solitude. For such excursions in the Forest, a guide is indispensable, and so far I was happily situated. Owing to the absence of houses, and the entangled divergence of cross-ways, any stranger might very easily lose himself, and wander for hours in a maze of perplexities.

My first excursion was towards Minstead, to a distance of two or three miles in a north-westerly direction, for the purpose of seeing Stony Cross, such being the name given to a memorial, known as Rufus's Stone, which in point of fact is not a stone, but a quadrangular pillar of cast-iron, about four feet high, indicating the spot where William Rufus was accidentally killed. In the silly craze for chopping off morsels, the original stone had been utterly destroyed, and hence the use of a less

perishable material. It stands in an open glade of green turf, at the bottom of a hill, near the roadside. We read as follows, on the first side: 'Here stood the oak tree, on which an arrow, shot by Sir Walter Tyrell at a stag, glanced, and struck King William II. (surnamed Rufus) in the breast, of which he instantly died on the 2d day of August, anno 1100.' On the second side: 'King William II. being slain, as is before related, was laid in a cart belonging to one Purkess, and drawn from hence to Winchester, and buried in the cathedral church of that city.' On the third side: 'That where an event so memorable had happened might not be hereafter unknown, this stone was set up by Lord Delaware, who had seen the tree growing in this place, anno 1745. This stone was repaired by John Richard, Earl Delaware, anno 1789.' On the fourth side: 'This stone having been much mutilated, and the inscriptions on each of its three sides defaced, this more durable memorial, with the original inscriptions, was erected in the year 1841, by William Sturges Bourne, warden.' The memorial, secured from dilapidation by being constructed of iron, is painted a grayish colour, to resemble stone, and seems likely to defy the hammers of those unscrupulous tourists who take a fancy for destroying all objects of curiosity within their reach. In Lyndhurst there is an old red brick edifice, near the church, shrouded in ivy, called the King's House, in which is the Hall, where the affairs of the Forest were at one time administered, and in which the pretended stirrup-iron of William Rufus used to be, and is perhaps still, shewn to the credulous.

The most satisfactory of my excursions through the Forest was to Boldrewood, lying several miles to the south of Lyndhurst. This, in my opinion, is the only spot worth visiting, so far as the spectacle of grand old timber is concerned. The trees are mostly oaks and beeches, of great height, and picturesque from their rugged antique appearance. Here and there we traverse open glades of greensward, on which grow a profusion of gorse and ferns, and where are observed browsing the black pigs and the cows of the villagers, also the gray Forest ponies which roam about in a state of nature. The deer are no longer seen. They were extirpated in 1838, as being a provocative of poaching, and no end of demoralisation. At present, the whole of the domain is under rigorous police regulations, at the instance of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. No unprivileged pursuit of game is permitted; no scraps of wood or bushes are allowed to be taken away. Everything is a matter of sale, even to the ferns, which are periodically cut down and disposed of for bedding to cattle. As only certain individuals, according to their heritable tenure, have the privilege of sending out animals to pick up a living in the Forest, and that within prescribed restrictions, there is a very general absence of animated nature; the result being a strange condition of deadness and profound silence. Entering the denser parts of

Boldrewood, from which domesticated animals are excluded, we pass vistas with trees of majestic grandeur. An oak was pointed out with a stem of more than twenty-two feet in circumference, and which I conjectured was at least five hundred years old. Such trees, with twisted and wide-spreading boughs, have formed a favourite study for those artistic and much-admired sketches of New Forest scenes that are now publicly exhibited in London. Latterly, from the absence of deer to eat down the underwood, some of the denser parts of the Forest are beginning to be choked with bushes of holly and other plants of natural growth.

On the outskirts of Boldrewood, as in sundry other places, we come upon districts inclosed with turf dykes and palings, and devoted altogether to plantations of the common Scotch fir. Some of these plantations are pretty well grown, others are in their infancy, and for the most part they seem to be thriving and well attended to as respects thinning and surface drainage. This species of pine is about the poorest of growing timber, and valueless for any purpose where durability is required. Among Scottish planters it has been superseded by larch, as more tough and imperishable, and well adapted for railway sleepers. The fir, however, being an evergreen, is useful for imparting shelter, and can be grown on thin soils where oak and beech would perish. The extensive growth of firs in the New Forest has been objected to—almost execrated—as detrimental to sylvan beauty; but I apprehend that in certain portions of land no other wood could be successfully reared. The thinnings, I was informed, are readily sold as underground props for coal-pits. That the government, as a matter of business, should carry on the growth of props for coal-pits, is a question that may invite remark.

The weather having become chilly and moist, we had rather a cold ride in a south-easterly direction by Brockenhurst to Beaulieu, and about midway had to cross the railway from Southampton to Dorchester, which, turning and winding, may be said to cut the New Forest in two. Brockenhurst is a genuine old Forest village, off the beaten track, and is so embosomed among trees that you come upon it quite suddenly. After this, southwards, the country begins to get bleak-looking, and at length it degenerates into a great black heath, across which the road stretches till it seems to die away in a point. Not a sheep, nor a cow, not even a bird, is visible. You are in a broad desert, barren and cheerless. The surface is a kind of scraggy turf, bristling with heather, resting on a hard subsoil of chalk and flinty stones, the very riddlings of creation. Whether it would be possible by any moderate expenditure of labour and capital to bring this wretched land into anything like profitable culture, I would not absolutely determine. We see wonderful things done at Woking, and similarly dreary spots, by squatters, who contrive, out of very unpromising land, to make pretty and productive gardens. One thing is very certain, that the heaths in the Forest are condemned to sterility by the practice of skinning off the turf for fuel. This may be tolerated under some old law, but I have seen nothing more suicidal since visiting the island of Foula, which lies in the far 'melancholy main' westward from Shetland. What in desperation of circumstances may be pitied and excusable in

that inclement solitude, is, I think, little else than a crime in the south of England. At any cost or compensation, turf-cutting in the wilds of the New Forest ought to be peremptorily stopped.

Strangely enough, on getting to the outside of the heath, we all at once arrive at the boundary of as well-inclosed fields as can be seen in the Lothians, yielding fair crops of corn and hay to reward the diligence of the farmer. Here, in fact, we enter on the estate of Beaulieu, once pertaining to the abbey of that name, but which, in the progress of territorial change, has passed through various families, till it became the property of the ducal house of Buccleuch. The village of Beaulieu lies in a valley to which penetrates a creek of the sea. On the eastern side of the creek, amidst trees, are the ruins of the abbey, and near them, overlooking the water, is the recently renewed mansion, occupied by Lord Henry Scott. Although the abbey has been destroyed, we are enabled to trace out its gigantic proportions. The old church is roofless, and so are the cloisters, partly clothed in ivy, and still shewing architectural carvings beautiful in their decay. The great Hall, or refectory of the convent, with a groined roof, is in good preservation, and has been converted into the parish church. To the ecclesiologist, the whole surroundings offer objects of learned consideration; and all are liberally open to the visitor.

Having in a leisurely manner visited different parts of the Forest, I departed by railway to Southampton. For those who travel by rail there is convenient communication with Lyndhurst by an omnibus, which attends all the trains that stop at the station, a distance of about a mile and a half from the village.

I may sum up the result of my visit in a few concluding remarks. Looking at the New Forest as a whole, the impression left on my mind is, that as a property of the crown it is remarkably well managed, but that it is wholly out of sorts with the age, and always becoming more so. It has long outlived its original purpose, and as it now exists it is an anachronism. Were it like Epping Forest, near a large city, the teeming population of which would prize it as a holiday resort for health and recreation, there would be some rational meaning in its maintenance. From its position in an out-of-the-way part of the country, it can serve no such purpose. As far as I could see, it is little visited by strangers; there being indeed very imperfect means of accommodating them. The persons from a distance who feel the deepest interest in the Forest are artists, who resort to it for studies of trees and woodland scenery. In this respect, it fulfils an important use, not to be treated lightly. I would submit, however, that for all the purposes of the artist, Boldrewood and a few other special parts might amply suffice, supplemented by the lawn scenery of private proprietors. It seems to me too much to ask that the entire Forest, in which, as shewn, there are large tracts of no artistic value whatever, should be preserved as a matter of æsthetics. There are thousands of charming sites for villas, many thousands of acres of land that might be reclaimable, were the property held on the ordinary tenure. It is unfortunately excluded from the general market, and is either valueless, or productive of an insignificant return. In an age of

pushing adventure, and with a redundancy of capital seeking an outlet, is this a state of affairs to command public approbation?

The Commissioners charged with the administration of the Forest, no doubt do their very best. But they are in a false position. They are hampered by antiquated rights and obligations; and it does not surprise us to hear that extensive changes are hinted at. The New Forest, as a piece of crown property, must be felt to be somewhat in the nature of an encumbrance. Just think of the British government, whose power is felt at the ends of the earth, being obliged to plant fir-trees to be sold as props in coal-pits, to make a huxtering trade of selling bundles of firewood, and to cut and dispose of withered ferns as bedding for cattle at so much the cart-load! Yet the proprietorship of the New Forest, as I have reason to believe, imposes these and some other paltry obligations, which few landed gentlemen in their private capacity would like to encounter. Admiring various spots in this ancient Forest, we would counsel no rash or sweeping change. Let renovations be brought about temperately and gradually, so as to bring the district into harmony with the rest of the country. And such renovations will doubtless come sooner or later. England is not so large a territory, as that its people should look with indifference to a huge section of one of its best counties being permanently set aside as a wilderness merely on grounds of sentiment.

W. C.

STEPHEN BELL, THE USHER.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VII.

BELL had calculated almost every possible chance, and when they neared Briar House, he remained with Mr Trenlee behind the screen of a stone fence, and sent forward Willand, who would not be known to Prior, should the latter be there. His instructions were to force his way in if any objection were made, and keep the door until Bell, who could see his movements from where he stood, joined him. To the horror of Mr Trenlee, whose taste ran by no means in such a direction, the usher, as soon as Willand had started, quietly took a revolver from his pocket, made a hasty inspection of it, and then put it back again.

'My dear sir'—Trenlee began, intending to remonstrate against this awful illegality.

But Bell said hurriedly: 'It is all right; he has the door open now, and is speaking to some one inside.' He walked swiftly from his shelter, and, followed by the clerk, was soon at the side of Willand. No opposition whatever was made to their entrance, as it was quite taken for granted that they were the men whose arrival had been expected. Their first words, too, confirmed the impression, for Bell said boldly: 'Mrs Robinson?'

'All right,' returned Purvis; 'I'll go and see if she is ready. You mean to take her off at once, I suppose?'

'Certainly,' replied the usher; and as Purvis hurried up the stairs, he turned with a smile to

Trenlee, and murmured : ' All goes better than we could have expected.'

Trenlee, whose mind was still much troubled about the deadly instrument he had seen a minute or two before, smiled but feebly in return.

Purvis, as already has been said, interrupted the interview between Prior and the lady, telling the former that the men had arrived, and were ready to take the patient away at once. ' So much the better,' said Prior, ' for I believe she is meditating some desperate escape again.'

' Well, governor,' continued Purvis, ' then you had better see her off—I'll send the parties up.'

' No—no!' exclaimed Prior hastily; ' I think not. If I am in sight, she will never cease her appeals and reproaches, and may say some things I would rather these men should not hear. If I am away, she will know it to be hopeless, and will probably be obstinate and quiet.'

' There you are altogether wrong, master,' returned Purvis; ' it's the sight of you as makes her dumb. These parties, too, may want some instructions.'

' Not from me,' said Prior; ' in fact, they have never seen me, and don't know me. I have settled with their principal, and he has given them every needful instruction. I will go out by the back, and walk on the heath until she is gone; it will avoid a scene. I shall see the fly go down the road with her, and then I will return. There—enough!' he exclaimed, as Purvis opened his lips to speak; ' I mean to see as little of this business as possible.' Without another word he turned abruptly from the keeper, and disappeared down a corridor which led to the rear of the house.

Purvis looked after him with a sneer on his face, and muttered: ' You're a cure, you are. I wish the woman had put a knife in you when once you had paid me; blow me, if I don't. Or else,' he added, with a still uglier sneer, ' you are preciously wide awake in not seeing the fellows; if they've got their orders c'rrect, and carry them out, perhaps it's as well they shouldn't see you.—Here, Missis Robinson!' he cried, throwing open the door of the prisoner's room; ' here's your new friends. I hope you will like 'em better than your old ones. Me and my missis have been a deal too kind to you, and spoilt you; them parties won't, I'll bet a dollar. There, don't stare at me, but get your things on, and be off.' He left the room, and rejoined the strangers, one of whom was nearer than he had anticipated, for Bell had crept stealthily to the head of the stairs, listening eagerly for the slightest indication of treachery or alarm.

' Oh, you're here, are you?' said Purvis; ' well, there is her room. There's her boxes, down below. You will have to get her away yourself; I'm not paid for that, and you are, you know.'

' All right,' returned Bell. ' Is any one with her?'

' No,' was the reply; ' the governor's gone out.'

' Perhaps,' continued the usher, ' you would not mind sending one of your people to the turn in the road; he will find a coach there. Let him say the gentlemen from the station are ready.'

Purvis hesitated for a moment, and seemed inclined to argue that this also was not in the bond; however, he nodded an assent, and left; and then Bell, turning pale for the first time since he had been in the house, knocked at the door of the room indicated, and entered.

He found the poor lady now standing in the farthest corner of the room, her hands clasped, and her lips trembling with fear. She shuddered, and uttered a sound, which was almost a shriek, as Bell entered. He hesitated a little, as though disappointed at not being recognised, but recovering himself, said: ' Be not alarmed; if you knew who spoke to you, and why I am here, you would not fear.'

' It is many a long day since any one has spoken to me as you have now spoken,' she said; ' but I know your errand, and know your trade. Even if of kinder nature than those who have hitherto been my jailers, it is your business to be deaf to every appeal and cry I may utter, though they have long, long ceased to pass my lips.'

' My—madam,' said Bell, checking himself, ' you do not know my errand. I dread to be abrupt in my speech, yet time presses; and while I fear to give a sudden shock, yet I must at once say why I have come.'

' I thank you for your delicacy,' interrupted the lady—or, as she had now better be styled, Mrs Maylis; ' but you may proceed without fear. Others have been less considerate, and I know my doom. I am to be removed this day to a still lonelier spot, even this gloomy prison being considered too cheerful. Are you not to be one of my attendants?'

' I hope so,' returned the usher. ' But my dear Kate—Mrs Maylis, I mean, pray, summon fortitude to bear with good news and hope, as firmly as you so long have borne with evil fortune.'

She did not speak, but seemed by the motion of her lips to be repeating his last phrase.

' Ah! my poor suffering'—he involuntarily began, but again checked himself. He approached her reverentially, as he went on: ' You are free. Those in charge of you now are your friends—friends who would die to save you; and happiness is in store.'

' Is my husband forming some new treachery?' she said, with her searching eyes full upon the speaker's face; ' and why does it take this form?'

' Madam, you are free,' returned Bell; ' liberty and happiness are before you.'

' I do not understand you, sir,' she said; ' I can never know happiness again; and where friends are to come from, Heaven only knows.'

' Ah! do not shrink from me,' exclaimed Bell, who had drawn closer to her, ' nor deem that you have no friends—that there are none to whom you are near and dear. I dare not tell you all, lest the shock should be too great; but this you may know, that your infamous imprisonment is ended, and that you may look to me for protection. Poor girl!'

' I thank you very much for your sympathy,' said Mrs Maylis; ' but I do not understand all you say, nor do I know why you should be desirous to serve me.'

' Because—because,' said the usher, and do what he could a sob would rise in his throat—' it is—O Kate!' he cried, and tears broke forth at last, ' it

is because I am your father!' And, as he spoke, he dropped into a chair, and, burying his face in his hands, broke into an uncontrollable burst of hysterical sobbing.

His daughter had recoiled at first, but, carried away by his excitement, and moved perhaps by the sympathy of a woman with grief, she sank on her knees by his side, and drawing one of his hands from before his face, took it tenderly in her own. The opening of the door roused Bell; it was Mr Trenlee who entered. 'You will excuse my intrusion,' said the old clerk; 'but the fly has arrived, and we have no time to spare. You know every moment is precious.'

'It is—it is,' exclaimed Bell, rising, with all his old decision and sternness again in his face. 'We are here, Kate, by a ruse. Fear not that in any case we shall leave you; but if we are not clear in a few minutes, we may have to fight our way out. This I should do without hesitation, and if blood be shed, let it rest on the heads of those who provoke it; but, for your sake, I would avoid the use of force. Can you trust me? I am to you yet a stranger; you have only my words to vouch for the truth of my improbable tale; and you have been bitterly deceived. Doubt would be natural to you; but, O Kate! say you can trust me.'

She looked at him for an instant with those mournful, penetrating eyes, and then said: 'I will; I do. You are honourable, I am sure; and I will go with you where you will.'

'Thank Heaven!' exclaimed Bell; 'and ere many hours you will have still greater cause to believe.—Now, Trenlee.'

In a very few moments Mrs Maylis was equipped for the journey, her luggage was placed in the fly, all was ready; but she lingered a little, hesitated, and then said timidly to Bell: 'Is it trivial or out of place for me to think of a bird? My only solace and companion for years has been this poor canary. May I take him?'

'Take him!' echoed Bell; 'I would not have had you leave him for the world.—Here, Willand, take this cage; that is right.—Now, is there anything else you would be sorry to leave behind?'

'No,' said Mrs Maylis, with a sad smile; 'my bird is the only thing here I have been attached to.'

They were now in the hall; Willand, with an air of carelessness, was lolling against the door-post, so that no sudden suspicion on the part of Purvis could cause the closing of the door, until, at any rate, the stalwart form of the young man was removed. The keeper and his wife, with two or three servants, had gathered to see their inmate depart, when, after a little whispering, Purvis came forward as Bell moved to the door, and said: 'You'll excuse me—but who is the old party with you? The governor said there was to be only two.'

'Is it of any consequence to you who he is?' demanded Bell, in his sternest manner. 'If you know your business half as well as you should do by this time, you ought to know that the fewer questions you ask the better.'

Purvis shrank back; but his better-half was not so easily cowed, and pushing forward, said: 'If my husband was of my mind, that woman should not go until I knew something more about you.'

Bell felt the arm he held tremble at the sound

of the woman's voice, although it had been still enough while Purvis spoke. 'I never saw regulars behave like you,' continued the speaker; 'and if there ain't a screw loose somewhere, I'll be —' The rounding off of this sentence was very vigorous and masculine in its style, but Mrs Purvis was quite as picturesque in her language as any one of the sterner sex. She proceeded: 'Either the governor is sold, or that party as you are a-taking away will find you precious deceitful, and will wish she was back at Briar House before many days are over. Mark what I say.'

During this speech, Trenlee had been adjusting the interior of the chaise, but he suddenly left his task, and stepping hurriedly to the side of Bell, said something in a frightened whisper, which caused the latter to cut short the eloquence of Mrs Purvis, and lead his companion at once to the vehicle.

Prior, as he had said he would do, left the house, and paced uneasily to and fro on the heath during the time which must elapse ere the coach could appear; every minute in this space seemed ten, and every possible horror which could attend the removal of the prisoner passed through his mind. At one time he fancied that even at the distance to which he had gone—nearly a mile—he could hear violent shrieks, and he pictured the patient struggling helplessly in the grasp of the keepers; when he strained every nerve again to catch the sounds, and all was silence, he fancied that a gag, or a blow, might have hushed the screams—for he knew the character of the men he had hired. 'I hope there will be no violence,' he muttered; 'I warned the doctor strictly, that until they got her safe home, they were to be very careful. It would be a dreadful thing if anything were to happen in the removal. Somebody would be sure to betray it, and then'— He resumed his patrol here, and walked up and down a piece of ground from which, without much chance of being seen himself, he could command the house, and the white road leading to the station. 'How tediously slow they are,' he muttered again. 'If all had gone well, they would have been out of the house long before this; and yet I don't know,' he added, glancing at his watch, which told him how long he had really been on the watch. 'I wish,' he began, 'I had not come down at all. I was foolish to do so; it always upsets me.'

At this moment a shout from behind him attracted his attention, and turning, he saw two tall powerful-looking fellows, each of whom carried a carpet-bag, approaching from the opposite side of the heath.

'Are we right for Briar House, master?' said one.

'Yes,' replied Prior, looking anxiously at the men. 'That is Briar House, on the rise before you.'

'Are you sure it is, master?' said the spokesman of the two, 'because we don't want no sell this time. None of your Yorkshire tricks.'

'What do you mean?' asked Prior, a vague feeling of alarm creeping over him.

'Why, I mean this,' said the other, who stopped and turned round to give more emphasis to his speech: 'one of your Yorkshire people has sent us a good four mile over this here common, after Briar House, where we ought to have been an hour ago. I don't want no larks like that. Is

that house Bill Purvis's or not? because it's Bill Purvis's house we want, whether it's Briar House or whether it isn't.

'Yes, my good fellow, that is Purvis's,' replied Prior, growing more uneasy every instant, although he could not tell why. 'As I know Mr Purvis very well, perhaps I may ask if you are strangers here, and if you have travelled far?'

'Travelled far!' echoed the fellow. 'We've come from four mile on the other side of London, and was to have been here— Come on, Curly,' he said, interrupting himself; 'it's no use a-talking now.'

'Stay one moment!' exclaimed Prior, whose cheeks, lips, and all, had turned white on hearing this last sentence. 'Have you come from Wammer-smith? Speak, idiots! and don't stare helplessly at me. Have you come from Dr Brymmer? You called him Curly. Is your name Nicks?'

All this was asked in such a hurried yet choked tone, his looks were so wild and terrified, that the man stared at him a few seconds without replying; at last he said: 'I don't talk of my business out of school; but you know all about it, it seems. We are the parties from Brymmer—Dr Brymmer, as you call him, and as he calls himself, though when I first knew him'—

With an absolute yell of rage and terror, Prior threw up his hands wildly, and cried: 'Then I am betrayed and ruined! Some villains have assumed your names, and are now in the house removing the patient. My name is Prior; I am your employer. What is to be done?'

'It's that old party! Strike me blind if it isn't!' said the man to his companion.—'Well, governor, I don't know what's to be done. We shall be paid all the same, I suppose?'

'Paid! Hark ye,' said Prior; 'I will double and treble your pay if you will, at any hazard and at any damage, take her from the scoundrels. Join me. Are you armed?'

'We've got our life-preservers, of course; they will do, I daresay,' returned the man.

'Then, if you want to earn fifty pounds apiece for five minutes' work, follow me,' said Prior. 'Throw your bags down there—no one will see them; and if they are lost, I will pay their value twice over. Come!'

Without further discussion, they ran at speed down the incline, and had crossed the greater part of the intervening space when Trenlee saw them.

His whisper to Bell was: 'For Heaven's sake, make haste! The keepers I threw off the scent are running down the heath at the back of the house, and will be here directly.'

In another minute they were all in the fly, and driving from the court-yard, but in rounding the side of the house they came for a moment nearer the men, who were easily to be seen and recognised now. Trenlee and Bell were standing up in the carriage, and looking towards them; Mrs Maylis, at Trenlee's suggestion, was reclining under the hood, so screened that she could neither see nor be seen. The men made frantic gestures as they saw the fly draw from the premises, and Bell said in a low tone to his companion: 'As I thought—that scoundrel Prior is with them.'

'Prior! Is he Prior?' exclaimed Trenlee, as he took his glass from his eye. 'We shall be followed! There is Purvis running from the back of the house to meet them. We shall be

followed, Bell, for the man you call Prior is her husband, Captain Maylis.'

'Is he?' returned Bell in a tone which, though subdued enough, made the old clerk shudder. 'Then his fate is in his own hands, for, if he follows and overtakes us, I'll shoot him like a dog. I will; I swear it! He dies, if he comes near me this day!'

Purvis was now seen to run back to the house, and enter the stables, and then another man went to the kennels where the mastiffs were kept.

'They will be after us directly,' said Bell. 'Can your horse go?' suddenly demanded Trenlee of the driver.

'Yes,' said the man.

'Then turn short off here,' continued the clerk, 'and drive as hard as you can to Wanlee station: we will pay you well.'

In an instant the thong sounded on the flanks of the horse, which, breaking into a very fair gallop, rattled the coach along on its new journey.

'At Wanlee station,' continued Trenlee, addressing Bell, 'we shall just catch the fast train which passes Rittle without stopping. We shall barely do it, and the time our pursuers will lose in going on to Rittle station will certainly throw them out. There is no train then for half an hour, and then it is a stopping one; so we shall be at Onslope fully four hours before they can possibly reach it.'

'Good,' said Bell. 'I am as anxious as yourself to get away peaceably.—It is only right to tell you, driver,' he continued, 'that we may be followed by those who have no right to meddle with us, and that we shall resist them. We, of course, do not wish you to risk anything by interfering, and if any injury is done to your horse or vehicle, we shall make amends.'

'Thank 'ee, sir,' replied the driver, who was a bluff-looking Yorkshireman, and a fitting partner for Willand, who sat beside him on the box; 'but if it's that hang-dog Bill Purvis as be coming, wi' your leave, I'll have a coot at un mysen.'

Bell smiled at finding this unexpected ally; while Trenlee ejaculated: 'Bless me! how fond of fighting the man must be!'

At this moment a gap in the wood which skirted the road afforded a glimpse of Briar House and the vicinity; the driver only, who of course knew the country best, caught sight of it, but he exclaimed: 'They be out all in full croy! There's the gig an' two saddle-horses, and them mastiff dogs. If they coom oop wi' us, we shall have a tussle. Coom oop!' With this he lashed his horse afresh, and on at a hard gallop they went.

There was very little more spoken along the road; Bell stood up all the way, looking anxiously behind them, but the road lying low, and being lined with trees, they could see nothing of those they dreaded, and could not guess whether they had gone on to Rittle, or by some unlucky chance had found out the change at once. The five miles to Wanlee station were soon covered; but as they drove down the last stretch of the road, they saw the white puffs of steam rising above a cutting at no great distance, and it was doubtful if they would catch the fast train. With more lashes than were good for the horse, and more Yorkshire oaths than were good for himself, the driver drew up at the station door just as the engine glided by the side of the platform. No time was to be lost:

Willand took the tickets, while Bell assisted the lady to alight; her pallid face shewed that she had heard and comprehended all. In another minute they were all seated in the train, the driver of the fly having been dismissed with a handsome gratuity. The guard sounded his tremulous whistle, the engine answered with its scream, and with thankful hearts our party felt the first tug which sets the train in motion. The guard, walking by the side of the slowly moving carriages, to have the last possible moment for chat with the station people—as is the wont of guards—happened to cast his eyes behind him just as the quickened way of the train forced him to break into a trot.

'Why, there's a regular mob a-coming down to the station,' he exclaimed; 'a trap, and two or three horses, and they're a-waving handkerchiefs and everything. Well, they're too late now.—Good-day, Jack.' Then, springing into his box, he craned his neck out to watch the party of which he had spoken, and just ere his carriage disappeared round the curve, he saw them rush on to the empty platform.

CHAPTER VIII.

The ride to Onslope was a long one, as the reader knows, yet very little was said on the way. Mrs Maylis, by a reaction, natural after the violent excitement of the day, became very melancholy and dispirited, but she would not hear of any proposal to break the journey. She wished 'to go home,' she said; although she could not have had the faintest idea as to the kind of home they were taking her to, or what sort of resting-place she would find it. As they neared Onslope, this last idea became painfully vivid to Bell, and he gently told her that he was not a rich man, and that her residence for the present would be in his humble lodgings. She motioned him to silence with her hand, and then said something in so low a tone that Bell could not hear; he bent his ear to her lips, and caught the words: 'I have confidence in you; I shall be happy anywhere with you—father.'

Bell pressed her hand, and spoke no more until they arrived at Onslope.

A moment's discussion between Trenlee and Bell settled one point, which was, that they should drive in the first instance to the lodge—sending on Willand in advance, to prepare the inmates for their coming—there, each knew, the stranger would be sure of sympathy—and thither, in the familiar *Oakmount Arms* fly, they went. The driver of the said fly asked a question as they entered his vehicle, which he would probably have spared if he had known all. 'Hope you're well, sir,' said the man, touching his hat to Bell. 'Have you seen anything of Mr Prior lately, sir? The *Arms* don't seem the same place without him; so free and lively a gent as he was.' A brief negative was the reply, and the man continued, as he closed the door: 'Sorry for that, sir; I was in hopes you had brought him back with you, as I knew you was such constant friends.'

Trenlee explained to Mrs Maylis, during their brief ride, that she was going to see kindly, although very plain people; honest, honourable, and true, who would be pleased to make her forget, by their sympathy, all she had gone

through. She listened, and smiled; but hers was a very sad smile; and soon the vehicle stopped at the gates of a large park, where stood, evidently awaiting their coming, a big burly, white-haired old man, who held by the hand a very handsome, slender boy of some ten years old. As she saw them, Bell's watchful glance saw also a thrill pass through her, and a momentary flash come into her eyes; but it faded away, and with a sigh and a smile, she prepared to alight. The bluff old yeoman stepped forward, and assisted her from the carriage, lifting her—white-haired though he was—with as much ease as if she had been a child. 'You are heartily welcome, ma'am, to Oakmount Lodge,' he said, raising his straw hat as he spoke; and then, turning to Bell, he wrung his hand for a moment in silence.

It was as nearly dark as summer night ever is, when Mrs Maylis entered the lodge, and found in the neat parlour a woman about her own age, or a little older, dressed in black silk, with—as she noticed even at the first glance—a watch and chain conspicuously displayed. 'My daughter Priscilla, ma'am,' said the keeper.

'And my best friend, and, until to-day, my only one,' added Bell.

It was proposed that Mrs Maylis, tired as she must be, should retire to rest at once; but she begged to rejoin them after she had refreshed herself with the traveller's greatest luxury, cold water; for she said that an hour spent in quiet conversation where she felt safe, where all were friends, and where no jailer could intrude, would not only be greater happiness than she had known for years, but would soothe her mind and procure her rest. So she was shewn the little white bedroom which it was arranged she should that night occupy, and which was inside Priscilla's, so that no one could come to her room without first passing through Miss Lamsett's. To one who peopled the air with pursuers, and saw a lurking enemy in every distant shade, this was in itself an assurance of safety, which was heightened by the homely peaceful air of everything around; and by the kind although rather deferential manner of the keeper's daughter. It would have been difficult for Mrs Maylis to explain how she came by the knowledge, but although no more had been said in any way bearing on the subject than the few words uttered by Bell as an introduction, she knew as well, ere she descended to the little parlour again, that Priscilla Lamsett was engaged to be married to her father, as though she had heard it stated by each of them.

Had it not been for the presence of Mr Trenlee, a very constrained air would have pervaded the party so strangely met; but the old clerk was, or feigned to be, in capital spirits, despite his recent fatigues, and he chatted easily and freely about the beauty of the park when seen by daylight, the number of years Mr Lamsett had served the Earls of Oakmount; then, by a very slight and natural allusion, he drew the old keeper on to tell how he first came to know much of Mr Bell; how the latter happened to walk through the park while Mr Rule the surveyor was insisting on some plan which the keeper knew was wrong—how Lamsett, recognising one of the masters from Hanover House, had appealed to him, and how Master Bell proved himself a better arguer and drawer-out of plans than the surveyor. 'And if

'you'll believe me, ma'am,' concluded the old man, 'his lordship was a-standing by all the while, as pleased as Punch; and he thanked Mr Bell most heartily when all was over, and told me that the park and the ponds were always to be open to him.'

The conversation after this became general and free, until an interruption was caused by the entrance of the slender boy who had attracted the notice of Mrs Maylis at the gate; he came in under the guidance of Mary, the little servant, to say 'good-night' in childish fashion, and to kiss Priscilla.

'And have you not a kiss for me?' said Mrs Maylis.

'Yes,' answered the boy, and went very boldly to the strange lady, who kissed him more than once, and held him for a moment at arm's length, ere, with another sigh, she released him.

'Who is that dear little boy?' she asked, as Alfred disappeared. 'Not your son, I presume?' she added, speaking to Mr Lamsett.

The old keeper got out the first words of a negative answer; and Bell was about to make some ambiguous speech, which might serve to pave the way for a further disclosure, when Trenlee rose and said: '*Madam, that dear little boy is—YOUR SON.*'

Joy never kills, and the shock given to Mrs Maylis by the abrupt announcement of Trenlee, was so quickly surmounted, that on the very next day she was seen walking with her father and little Reginald, as we must now call him, in the leafy glades of Oakmount Park, and sailing in the skiff upon the lake. It would be of no use to dwell on the deadly shudder which ran through her frame, ever and anon, when she thought of the worse than jail from which she had been released; or the fear that kept haunting her, that she would shortly awake, to find all this a dream. No one could pass so suddenly from such a terrible existence to a life full of light, and hope, and happiness, without being often reminded of the fetters which had so lately been struck off.

There was trouble in anticipation, too, for them, as there was the baffled ambition and hate of Captain Maylis to be feared, turned now, as it doubtless was, into a longing for revenge. Such belief in the reality of his hate did Bell entertain, that he made his daughter promise never to leave his lodgings, whither she at once removed, unless he or Mr Trenlee were with her; he felt that a certain amount of dread of himself would be entertained, especially as he took good care to let it be known that he always went armed; while as for Trenlee, although he was old, he was a lawyer, and Bell was right in supposing that fact to be a tolerable safeguard. Trenlee, however, despised all these fears, and made a jest of their precautions; he knew the position better than they did, he said, and that they held all the trump cards. Maine, Firth, and Maine could not afford to mix themselves up with a public scandal, whatever they might do with a private one; while such an exposé as the violence Bell dreaded, or even a lawsuit, would almost ruin the bank of Maylis, Maylis and Company, which was chiefly supported by the High Church people. At his dictation, Bell wrote what seemed to the latter a very tame and colourless letter, which was sent to the great

lawyers; and with what patience he could muster, he awaited the result.

As Trenlee had foretold, in a very few days they had a communication from Maine, Firth, and Maine—for the style of the firm was kept up, although the chief partner had retired—requesting Bell to call at the West End house where he had before seen the lawyer. This time he saw Mr Firth, a very different sort of person, he being a tall, large-whiskered man, who had a domineering way with him, much calculated to impress the timid, but of very little service with a man like the usher from Hanover House. The lawyer adopted very little of the circumlocution usually attributed to his craft, but went straight to work, admitting in the outset that he received his instructions from Sir Reginald Maylis; and the tone of the discussion may be gathered from a few sentences near its close. 'Then you still maintain that this young woman is the wife of Captain Maylis?' said the lawyer sternly; 'and you mean to proceed on that assumption?'

'I do,' returned Bell.

'Now, come!' exclaimed Mr Firth, suddenly changing his tone; 'you are a business man, I can see, and so am I. It will answer your purpose better, I do not hesitate to say, if you will drop this claim. Sir Reginald is rich, and can pay, and I will promise that he shall pay. Now, let us see what we can do.'

'You have brought me up to London for nothing,' said Bell, 'if you can only fall back upon such a proposal; at least half-a-dozen times have you broached it in some form, and I have repudiated it as often. I do so again. My daughter is Captain Maylis's wife, and has been recognised as such by hundreds of persons.'

'By the way,' said the lawyer, 'it has never been explained why your daughter was described as Katharine Rose Dainton, while your name is Bell.'

'My name is not Bell,' said the other calmly; 'but I need not point out to you that my using a feigned name does not invalidate my daughter's marriage.'

The lawyer smiled slightly, paused for a moment, and then said: 'Well, I do not see that we can do any good by prolonging this discussion. I shall report your determination to Sir Reginald, and take his instructions.'

The usher had been secretly admiring the foresight of Trenlee, who had told him almost exactly what course would be taken by the lawyer; and his own reply was in accordance with advice from the same authority. 'Do so,' he said, 'and tell him that I do not mind disclosing my intentions even to an enemy's solicitor. Money I want less than you seem to suppose; my daughter and her child can live without aid from Captain Maylis; but he knows, and you know better still, what offences he has committed, and in eight-and-forty hours from this time, if he is to be found in England, he shall be arrested. I bid you good-evening, sir.'

'Mr Bell—I beg pardon, Mr Dainton,' said the lawyer, rising, and displaying more excitement than he had hitherto done, 'I must ask you to grant me one favour, and I know your word may be relied on: promise that for the forty-eight hours you speak of no proceedings shall be commenced against Captain Maylis, and I promise in return, that within that time you shall have an

answer from Sir Reginald, and that no advantage of the delay shall be taken.

Bell gave the required pledge; and the lawyer took leave of him with a warmth which contrasted very much with his demeanour during the earlier part of the interview.

Trenlee was much pleased when he heard Bell's account of what had passed, but admitted that the instantaneous collapse of the lawyer exceeded his utmost hopes, and indeed somewhat puzzled him. But Mr Firth kept his promise. Ere the two days had expired, a large official-looking envelope arrived by post at Bell's lodgings, and this contained a formal offer on the part of Sir Reginald Maylis, to prevent any further interference with Mrs Maylis. She was so styled in the deed, and fully recognised; her son was to remain in her care, unless she preferred his being with Sir Reginald, who would then take charge of him; a large annuity was secured to her, and ample provision made for the boy.

Though a fear and dread hung about her husband's name, the unfortunate lady sought no vengeance for all she had suffered, and would have been only too glad to consent to any terms that would allow her to dwell in peace. Everything was left to her father's judgment, and he hesitated not a day in closing with the baronet's proposal. It was soon seen why such anxiety was displayed to prevent even the commencement of legal proceedings against Captain Maylis; and the revelation greatly delighted Trenlee, who had insisted all along that there was something behind the scenes. Captain Maylis was returned to parliament for a borough where the bank possessed great influence, and there was quite a flourish of trumpets in the papers on his side as to the great accession of practical knowledge and sound judgment which the political world would receive from such a man. They—the papers aforesaid—were authorised, too, to contradict in the most direct manner certain rumours which had crept into circulation, relative to an alliance between the honourable and gallant member and a certain beautiful scion of aristocracy; no such alliance was on the *tapis*, and those who promulgated such reports shewed an entire ignorance of the matter.

When, after the lapse of some years, the old banker died, and his son became Sir Reginald, Bell was sounded by an agent from the firm of Maine, Firth, and Maine, to ascertain if Mrs Maylis were willing to give up Reginald, who was by this time growing out of boyhood. But the mother and son clung too closely to each other; the offer was rejected, and was never renewed.

There is very little left now to tell. Bell, as we still call him, although he adopted his real name of Dainton, gave up his situation at Hanover House, to the annoyance of those who had speculated upon him as a continual deputy for vacation duty; and in a very short time married Miss Priscilla Lamsett. They lived in a house adjoining one occupied by Mrs Maylis, at a pretty little town some half-a-dozen miles from Onslope. They did not go farther away, because Priscilla wished to see her father frequently; while, although it was only a forty minutes' drive from the lodge, yet, being in a cross-road, they were almost as free from the intrusion and curiosity of those who had known them at Onslope, as though they had moved fifty miles away. The usher

was never known to tell so much of his past life—even to his wife, of whom he was extremely fond—as he had told to little Alfred Rainwood on the morning they sat by the lake.

When old Lamsett died, he proved to be a much richer man even than his neighbours had decided he ought to be, although neighbours in such a case usually go pretty high. The larger portion of his means was left to Bell and Priscilla, who were in no need of it for themselves, but they were the possessors of a couple of little Bells, and the money, as the usher remarked, 'would come in nicely for them.' Trenlee lived with Mr and Mrs Bell until his death, which did not happen until he was some fourscore years of age; and the massy gold snuff-box, so prized by the old clerk, became an heirloom in Bell's family.

Bell never quite got over the cautious and suspicious habits he had been taught in a life of strife and danger; at any rate, it was many years ere he ceased to come quietly out of his house, after all lights in the lower part were extinguished, and walk around the garden and outhouses, keeping as much in the shade as possible. He usually went through this ceremony armed, and once owned to Trenlee, who jested with him about it, that he never went out on the errand a single night, that he did not feel that Maylis was lurking in the grounds. It never was so, but had such an event really occurred, there might have been a risk of the political world losing one of its 'brightest ornaments.'

THE BIRDS OF THE POLAR REGION.

WHILE the Arctic Expedition is absent, its many well-wishers will often, in imagination, place themselves in the company of the heroes, will sail beneath frowning icebergs with them, and even lend a hand in tugging the sledges over the rough ice-fields. Thanks to the records of previous adventurers, and to the artist's facile pencil, we seem perfectly at home amongst the frozen solitudes over which lies the track to the north pole. The difficulty of realising these regions lies rather in being able to figure to the mind the particular aspects of the kingdom of ice, the mosses, lichens, vegetation, insects, &c. which will meet the explorers' eyes. At the first blush, it might be supposed that the severe cold would be fatal to all insect life, yet Otho Fabricius collected sixty-three species of insects during a residence of six years in Greenland. In the still higher latitude of Winter Harbour only six species of insects were found by Sir E. Parry during his stay from September till the following August. But insects do not require for their existence a continuous period of warm weather, so much as hot weather during some time of their little lives, so that it is perfectly conceivable that high up in Smith's Sound, during the brief summer, a few insects may be obtained. The mosquito, it is known, cannot live in the latitude of Melville Island, so that this pest at all events will be conspicuously absent from the difficulties of the expedition. Vegetation is meagre enough north of Disco. Considering the extreme cold that is to be encountered, an interesting question arises regarding the birds that may possibly be discovered by

the arctic voyagers. In our conjectures on the point, a very competent authority comes to our assistance. Scientific manuals on the physical and natural history of the arctic regions were compiled for the present expedition, and Professor Newton wrote a paper amongst them on the Birds of Greenland, from which we will borrow the main features of that country's avifauna, in order to illustrate our subject. The phenomena connected with the appearance and departure of several of the migratory birds which visit Greenland, open many very interesting questions, and the scientific staff on board the *Alert* and *Discovery* will pay especial attention to these questions. A few of them may here in the first place be indicated.

Among the dozen gulls or thereabouts which frequent the fur-producing countries of North America, one of the most graceful and beautifully coloured is Sabine's Gull (*Larus Sabini*), discovered, as its name imports, by Captain E. Sabine off the west coast of Greenland. This bird was met by Sir E. Parry in Prince Regent's Inlet, and again on Melville Peninsula. It arrives in high northern latitudes in June; but why should it—as it does—depart again so early as the month of August? Has it accomplished nidification, and finds no further need of staying in the frozen north for a longer period? Or does the first breath of winter deter it from a longer stay, as the early frosts of October quicken the departure of our swallows? A bird so elegantly fashioned as Sabine's gull, with its forked tail, jet black collar, and the curiously versatile colours of its head, a tinge of black, brown, blue, or purple overspreading it, according to the light in which it is viewed, should invite inquiries as to its life-history; and doubtless we shall be wiser on this point should the present expedition return safely.

Again, what a curious history is that of the Great Auk (*Alca impennis*). It has had an existence, as known to science, of rather less than three hundred years, and now, as it is feared, has become extinct. First discovered in 1574 by an Icelandic named Clemens in Danell's Islands, off the east coast of Greenland, a large colony of the gaw-fowl, as it was termed, lived on the Gairfowlskerri, near Cape Reykjanes. In 1830 a volcanic eruption caused this reef to be swallowed up by the sea, the survivors of the gaw-fowl escaping to the island of Eldey. With the exception of a few stuffed birds in different museums, and some of their eggs, the rest of this auk's history is contained in scattered notices of its occurrence in the Faroe Islands, North America, and Greenland, and even on a few points of Great Britain. Its last appearances on our shores were at Papa Westra, Orkney, 1812; St Kilda, 1822; Lundy Island, 1829; and in 1844 at the long strand of Castle Freke in Ireland, where one was picked up soaked with water after a storm, though in 1845 a report was prevalent that a pair had been seen in Belfast Bay. At Eldey, off Iceland, a male and female were killed in 1844; these are the last known in Iceland. Its bones are found in Funk Island, off the coast of Newfoundland; and quite recently, traces of them have been discovered in Jutland, and again in Caithness. And so ends the romance of the Great Auk. Originally a wingless arctic bird, it floats and dives into more southern latitudes till it falls under the ken of man. Ill fitted by its habits to contend with his weapons of destruction, it gradually fades away before civilisa-

tion, and, Nature herself seeming to aid in its extinction, disappears altogether in 1844 from his horizon. As the legend which Kingsley has so gracefully embodied in the *Water-babies* makes it come years ago from 'Shiney Wall, where it was decently cold, and the climate fit for gentlefolks,' will the present Arctic Expedition have the glory of rediscovering this bird in its original haunts? At anyrate, any particulars which can be collected concerning its history will be looked for by all ornithologists with great eagerness. Another very rare bird, Ross's Gull (*Rhodostethia rosea*), of which only seven or eight examples have been seen, may be looked for in Smith's Sound. Three of these specimens were shot in Disco Bay.

Another interesting question, lately referred to in our columns, and which it may be hoped will be solved by our arctic heroes, relates to the breeding-place of the Knot (*Tringa Canutus*), a little bird very well known to all dwellers on the east coast of England. This bird is about the size of a large snipe, and throngs during autumn and spring our own coasts, as well as those of Europe and North America. It must breed in large numbers somewhere in the arctic regions, for it regularly retires northward for that purpose, and has been tracked north of Iceland. It has not been seen on the east coast of Greenland, nor yet on Spitzbergen; it is supposed, therefore, that the countries to the west and north of Greenland are the goal of its northward migration. On the hypothesis of an open circumpolar sea, it is possible that the breeding-haunts of this little bird may be found on its comparatively milder shores. At anyrate, some contributions may be obtained towards a solution of the singular migratory movements of the bird. We have as yet spoken only of its northward migration; but towards the end of summer, it returns to us in still greater numbers than before, both old and young birds together frequenting our shores, till inclement cold weather drives them very far southward, until the following spring.

The ordinary birds of Greenland are pretty well known, thanks to the labours of foreign naturalists, and the observations made by Parry, Ross, and McClintock. Professor Newton catalogues them as about sixty-three, while some sixty-two more have been occasionally taken there. The majority are, as might be expected, littoral and aquatic birds. From these denizens of Greenland a selection of thirty-six is made, which he deems, from a consideration of their life-histories elsewhere, and from various facts which seem to bear on their geographical range, may very likely be met in the extreme arctic regions. At the same time, he frankly avows that 'if the expedition meets with thirty species in Smith's Sound, it will surpass expectation.' Writing, however, as Professor Newton does, for the crews of the two ships, who cannot all be supposed to be ornithologists, though all would gladly further the interests of ornithology if they have a chance, it was as well to be liberal in his account of the species which science reasonably supposes may be found in the polar regions.

Opening summer in 1876 will discover, we may hope, the crew of the *Alert*, which has wintered high up in Smith's Sound some way north of her consort, cheerily starting, after the long dreary winter, to visit the depot of provisions which they

established some eighty miles north of their winter-quarters, by means of a sledge-journey lasting three weeks, in the middle of the previous September. Most persons either saw the sledges and equipments of the men at Portsmouth before the ships left, or are able to form a tolerably correct notion of them from the engravings which were then published. Probably but few dogs survive, the extreme cold of the winter having acted on them, as it is well known to do, much as excessive summer heat is wont to do on their relatives in more temperate climes. The blue-jackets, therefore, have harnessed themselves to the sledges as enthusiastically as they did to the guns in the Crimean war, and the party is slowly moving to the mysterious pole at the rate of about ten miles a day. Everywhere, green ice capped with white snow, a dreary waste, meets their eyes, while in front lies a rugged region of contorted and riven ice, broken up by the sea, and again frozen into grotesque forms, spanned by the 'water-sky' overhead, which tells of open water. The travellers are beyond the ordinary haunts of the polar bear; all is still, vast, colourless, and monotonous. On a sudden, what seems an animated bundle of snow-flakes rises into the clear gray sky on one side of the party, and on being shot, turns out to be a snowy owl, which had been picking the bones of a long-tailed duck. Both these birds have been shot in Scotland. Soon a 'gaggle' (as the little company would be termed in British sporting books) of Brent, or perhaps snow geese, wings its way athwart their path. A rock ptarmigan or two are brought down on the highest part of the day's journey, reminding several of the officers of bygone days on the peaks of the Western Highlands, when grouse would not lie in the corries below, and the only way to fill a bag was to climb for a chance at the ptarmigan on the mountains' brows. These are now eagerly welcomed, as an addition to the evening meal, and seem a link to bind their slayers still closer with the far-off delights of home. On, on, the weary travellers plod, conversation having ceased, the ringing of the steel-bound sledges on the hardened ice-crusts being often the only sound heard, and that so monotonous, as to conspire, together with the biting air, to render the party very drowsy. On a sudden a whistle of wings is heard, and up dash some plover, our familiar British gray plover, now in summer plumage, the little ringed dotterel of our sea-shores; or, perchance, a 'trip' of the American golden plover, distinguished from the well-known European bird by having the axillary plume under the wing gray instead of white; while a skua hovers on their flanks; and, most delightful now of all sights, because it is so homelike, on a neighbouring mass of granite and gravel—the moraine of some glacier which ages ago crawled down into the sea—sits a croaking raven. Omens are unthought of amidst the stern realities of arctic sledge-travelling. Its hoarse voice now sounds more delightful than ever sung the most melodious of nightingales in the copes of distant Oxfordshire.

May fancy track the little party further? Two hours more of their laborious dragging being over, they stand on the frozen sand of the great circumpolar ocean. Gray, dim, and weird-like, it stretches away to the pole in gentle swells, unruffled by any breeze, and apparently but slightly animated by

tidal force. Its vastness and its sad aspect, broken by no sail, and never yet visited by civilised man, awe the party into silence; but abundance of birds with their loud calls and vigorous swoops, soon destroy this sense of desolation; as on our own shores, the turnstone and the sanderling run up and down at the edge of the wavelets; sandpipers and phalaropes fleck the distant flats; the arctic tern careers in mid-air, like the swallow of an English summer; eider-ducks, the little kittiwake, and the glaucous gull clamour in an adjoining inlet, where the great northern diver, the puffin, the guillemot, and the little auk are diving in all the exuberance of joy at the tardy blossoming of their cheerless summer. It is a busy scene, such as the ornithologists amongst the men remember to have seen off an Orkney skerry, or beneath the wave-lashed ledges of Donegal. While the tent is being erected, and they are looking over the unknown ocean before them with much the same longing eyes as did Sir S. Baker when he surveyed the vast and mysterious waters of the Nyanza Lake rolling towards him from the distant haze which closed in the west, a shout from one naturalist almost beside himself with delight, proclaims that he sees a couple of great auks stolidly contemplating him from a ledge of ice, and amazed at the intrusion! But here the work of fancy ends; and we must leave to the anxiously expected return of the expedition the exact particulars of this marvellous *rencontre* with the bird over whose existence hangs such a perplexing veil. We have performed our task, and indicated to the reader what species of birds may be met by England's heroes in the circumpolar regions.

A STORY ABOUT ILLEGIBLE WRITING.

WE were going to remove to another house, and my mother and I having lived for many years in the one we were about to quit, papers and trifles of all descriptions had accumulated in such inconvenient quantities, that we determined to give up an evening to sort the lumber, and to make a bonfire of that which we did not wish to keep. As we emptied old writing-desks, and drew forth letter after letter, sorting bookcases and other receptacles which contained pamphlets, and odds and ends of that kind, we would now and then pause over our labours, to con some yellow scrap of paper, or to find a bit of writing, perhaps devoid of envelope, and then carelessly throw them into the general heap.

As I was glancing over several letters which were packed away in a dear old workbox, now disused, I came on one which caused my heart to throb, I knew the writing so well; and all the other letters of the same writer, I treasured up in a particular casket, which on no account would I have permitted mortal hands to touch. There they had all lain for many a quiet year. I had been a young merry girl when they reached my hands. The penmanship was so extraordinarily like hieroglyphics, that I well remembered, in many instances, having impatiently thrown the letters down, exclaiming: 'If Gervase will persist in making himself illegible, I shall certainly not take the trouble to try and

translate his epistles; yet how I was interested in them all the while, and how I tried to guess the meaning, when it was impossible to make it out.

'I wonder,' observed my mother on such occasions, 'that a clever, highly educated young man like Gervase Markham has not learned to write better. How he will ever be able to read his own sermons, when he is called on to preach them, I cannot imagine.'

So, in the old workbox, I found one of his strangely scrawled epistles, which caused my heart to throb, as I have said. I had been seriously ill at the time when the date of it was new, and it had been placed in my workbox, and scarcely thought of again; I never had attempted to decipher it, from long-continued weakness. It was, however, the last I ever received from Gervase Markham; it had been a heart-break, and all was a dream of the past. What impelled me to open this old faded record of hopes and of fears, now? what mysterious impulse urged me to scrutinise carefully the closely written pages? closely written, but with characteristic illegibility. Probably, I had greater patience and experience than when that ink was fresh, for now I read and understood; and with a faint sensation as of approaching death, I recollect holding the fatal document to my breast, and crying out: 'O mother, too late—too late!'

I suppose long insensibility succeeded, as, on recovering consciousness, I found the household assembled round me, and my dear mother, spectacles on nose, regarding the old letter which had caused such mischief, much as if it was a living thing, and had power to bite.

Gervase Markham was the younger son of a Monmouthshire baronet, and intended for the church. We were boy and girl when we first met at his father's house, and Gervase was a grave, sensitive youth, plain in person, but with intellectual abilities of the highest order. I often wondered how he came to like me so much, such a spoilt, thoughtless girl; but he did; and though we entered into no positive engagement, for our parents, owing to close kindred, would not hear of that, yet we both felt that our mutual future happiness was bound up in each other. Gervase was poor, as a younger son, and had no prospect of being able to marry, as his family had no livings in their gift, and no Church interest. But we were young, and lived in hope; and at length we were allowed to correspond. I am quite sure that my letters were written in a clear, legible hand enough, and I should not have cared if all the world had read them, for I had no secrets, and they were not a bit like foolish love-letters, but only kind and friendly. I never was a demonstrative girl, and least of all in writing to Gervase. I have already alluded to the really shameful scrawl he wrote. Often used my dear mother to say: 'Well, Clara, have you got some hieroglyphics to pore over to-day?' I really do believe the naughty fellow liked to tantalise me, and hear himself accused of bad penmanship; for he always laughed at our complaints, and de-

clared that he wrote a beautiful hand, but that his sisters were stupid, and I was short-sighted!

Alas! short-sighted indeed. That last letter which I found in my workbox had been written after an interval of many months, when a coolness had arisen between the families; the old baronet was dead, the daughters of the house married, and my mother greatly disliked the heir and the proud lady his wife. Consequent on these circumstances, Gervase and I were somewhat estranged; not in heart; I know that now, when it is too late. On the evening of our rummagings, I read every word of that memorable letter; every word was, to my quickened intelligence, clear as if printed in large type; yet my mother said it might have been Egyptian characters for her!

Gervase had written in haste to tell me that he purposed joining an Indian mission immediately; would I accompany him? He was weary of waiting, and longed to be working amongst the heathen.

'You are well adapted to be a missionary's wife, and I think you will not disappoint me; but if you dislike the prospect of a long residence in Indian climes, then let me entreat you *not* to reply to this; and if I receive no letter from you, I shall consider that I am rejected; if so, this is a farewell—it may be the last; but in life or in death, you will still be the first and fairest on earth to me.'

Alas! I had never read this, his last letter—there it had lain all these dreary years in my old workbox, and now what chance (so called) brought it to light? Years had passed away since then; I had heard of Gervase Markham's departure for India, and I had accused him of fickleness and cold-heartedness. My own sisters had long been wives and mothers; and I, the youngest, the spoilt, merry Clara, continued to live in a secluded home with my beloved mother, who declared that I was her best earthly comfort. For this, I was thankful. But then, poor Gervase, what must he have thought of me, on the supposition that I could so heartlessly reject him? I wrote to his favourite sister, whose residence was in Florence, and begged her to give me some tidings of her brother, the missionary. She replied, that Gervase meant to return to England, as soon as some one could be found to take his place; his health suffered greatly from the climate; but he seemed otherwise contented, and devoted to his work. Now, if this were a fictitious narrative, I should end it by bringing Gervase Markham home again, and making all things comfortable, by placing him in a pleasant parsonage in a small parish, where there was not much to do. He should continue faithful to my memory; and, when my oversight was explained, mutual explanations would of course ensue, leading to orange-blossoms and marriage joy-bells.

Nothing of the sort has happened. I know that Gervase is in Florence with his sister, because she wrote to say so, and that her brother sent his kind regards. How cold seem mere 'kind regards,' where warm affection was once given! I live in hope that we may yet meet, though I doubt if he would recognise the rather stout, middle-aged lady, as the Clara whom he used to paint in such flattering colours. I long to tell him how much unhappiness arose from his illegible writing; and I hope my sad story will be a warning to all who wish to avoid misunderstandings, and to excel in

caligraphy, which surely is as desirable an accomplishment as any other. I think that bad spelling and bad writing ought to go hand in hand. I mean that fatal letter to be placed on my breast in my coffin, and I hope that Gervase Markham may live to see it there.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ART and science have adjourned over the long vacation; but for the 'scientists' who, meanwhile, wish to be busy, the meeting of the British Association at Bristol, to commence August 21, will offer a resource. Sir John Hawkshaw is to be president; hence it is thought there will be a good deal about civil engineering in his opening address.

A temporary revival of the arctic question has been occasioned by the departure of a small private expedition in the *Pandora*, commanded by Captain Allen Young. The principal object of this party will be the further exploration of King William Land, in the hope of discovering yet more traces of the long-lamented party that sailed with Sir John Franklin. Of the great expedition—the *Alert* and *Discovery*—we shall probably hear nothing until the *Valorous* returns from Greenland.

While these explorers fight their way through the ice, the *Challenger* is pursuing her cruise in the South Sea, gathering further stores of knowledge preparatory to her return home in April of next year. Dr Wyville Thomson will then resume his professorial duties in the University of Edinburgh, and relieve Professor Huxley, who has so ably discharged the duties, and attracted so large a class during the present session.

And among the topics of talk are storms and shipwrecks. It is made clearer than ever, that if seamen will only use the lead and take soundings, instead of trusting to luck during a fog, they may save their ship from running on rocks or shoals. Eyes are of little or no use in the dense fogs that sometimes prevail in the vicinity of land, and the mariners must, so to speak, feel their way; and this can be done by means of the lead. The depth of the sea, and nature of the bottom, are now so well known around the coasts of all civilised countries, that the master of a ship who neglects to take soundings may be regarded as one who wilfully loses his ship. His neglect is now the more culpable, as Sir William Thomson has devised a method for taking what he calls 'flying soundings'—that is, without stopping the ship. The excuse that time would be lost is, therefore, no longer available.

It is remarkable that great floods have occurred in the two hemispheres. One of the largest river-valleys in France has been devastated by the rush of uprisen waters; and in Queensland, Australia, twenty-three inches of rain fell in twenty-four days, and the consequent flood was one of the deepest ever known in the colony. In one place the water rose twenty-nine feet, and covered the roof of the theatre. In another part

of the same colony, the wind blew with such vehemence as to overturn a railway train.

Another topic of talk is the discovery by the surveyors of Palestine of the city and cave of Adullam, in a broad low valley which formed one of the routes by which the Philistines broke in upon the fertile corn-lands of Judea. The name of the place is *Ayd el Mieh*, sufficient, as is said, for identification with the biblical Adullam. 'If this be agreed upon,' says the Report of the exploration, 'fresh light will be thrown on the principal scenes of David's outlaw life.'

A notion prevails that famines occur in India because the country is over-populated. Major-general Shaw, who has passed more than half his life in India, states, in a communication to the Marquis of Salisbury, 'that this belief of India being over-peopled is not only erroneous, but the very reverse of the truth, and that she is actually suffering from a dearth of population and labour, and that an entirely wrong cause is being assigned for the prevailing high prices, and scarcity of food for the labouring-classes.' The remedies proposed are, migration from populous localities to the districts which, though rich in mineral products, and in capabilities for cultivation, have scarcely more than twelve inhabitants to the square mile; the restoration of decayed districts, and a general extension of cultivation.

Messrs Macklin and Moore, of Queen Victoria Street, London, undertake to transport gunpowder and other explosive substances in a way of their own invention, which prevents all danger. It is a simple way, and can be made use of in ships, barges, wagons, storehouses, or magazines. Each barrel of powder, before it leaves the mill, is placed inside a water-tight case made of wood, and lined with sheet-copper. These cases being properly closed, are placed in tanks, which fit them, so to speak, with a coat of water one inch thick on all sides. Thus, during the whole time of transport, the barrels, snugly shut up in the cases, are kept dry, and are at the same time surrounded by water, whereby, as it seems, explosion should be impossible. Tanks adapted either for land-carriage or water-carriage are provided, and for the storage of powder by retail dealers; and at mining-works, quarries, or railway stations, the tank is constructed of galvanised iron, and is connected with a constant water-supply.

A machine for making tin boxes is worth notice, on account of the ingenuity displayed in its construction. Tin boxes to contain biscuits are now as familiar objects as cups and saucers. For some time past the sides and ends have been shaped by machinery; but it was necessary to use solder to fix on the bottoms. The new machine makes the boxes without solder, and consequently effects a great saving of time. The tin plates, trimmed and pierced, are laid on the 'feeding-table' at one end of the machine: thence they pass under rollers which turn up the edges; fold in wires to form the top edge of the boxes; and between jaws or pressers which shape and secure the ends and sides, after which the bottoms are put on without solder, and the lids are fitted. Thus the work

goes on producing eight boxes per minute, with three boys to 'feed' and 'take off.' If, as we assume, the machine is adaptable to different shapes and sizes, the manufacture of metallic boxes is likely to increase.

With this may be mentioned a painting-machine, brought out at Liverpool, which will paint six hundred wooden laths, or more than the same length of hoop-iron, in an hour. The next step will be to produce a machine that will paint window-frames, doors, and house-fronts.

A life-raft, which presents some novelty of construction and adaptation, has been exhibited at a meeting of the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia. Two hollow cylinders, eight inches diameter, and ten or twelve feet long, are held in position parallel to each other by cross bars from three to four feet in length, and wire-netting is then stretched over the whole. Thus prepared, the raft is used as part of the rails or bulwark of a ship, and is consequently always in place at the side, ready to be dropped into the water, and does not occupy space wanted for other purposes, as when boats or rafts are stowed on the deck. An improved knife for druggists' use in the cutting of dried herbs or tobacco was also exhibited: in this the blade is so connected with the lever that in descending it is held parallel with the cutting-board, and at the same time has a horizontal movement which slides it through the substances to be cut, and thus facilitates the operation.

The Council of the Royal United Service Institution announce that they will grant a gold medal annually for the best essay on a military or naval subject, which may be sent in to them on or before November 1 in each year. The subject for the present year is: On the best type of war-vessels for the British Navy—(1) for combined action; (2) for single cruisers of great speed; (3) for coast defence.

We mentioned some months ago the pyrometer invented by Mr C. W. Siemens, F.R.S., which, placed within a furnace, will indicate the temperature, however high, by means of a galvanometer outside, with which it is connected. It is a philosophical instrument of rare excellence, quite worthy of the reputation of the inventor. In the *Transactions* of the Society of Telegraph Engineers, Mr Siemens has published an account of a preliminary experiment, which will, we think, be interesting to many readers. He was engaged by Her Majesty's government to superintend the laying of the under-sea cable between Malta and Alexandria. He had noticed that cables, when coiled in a ship, behave like damp hay-ricks, and generate heat, at times with destructive effect; and availing himself of the fact that electrical resistance increases with increase of temperature, he prepared coils of wire, inclosed them in tubes, and buried them in different parts of the great coil. The external layers of the coil remained cool, but the wires projecting from the tubes indicated a steady rise of temperature in the interior until it had reached 98 degrees. 'A few degrees of additional rise of temperature,' says Mr Siemens, 'must have destroyed the insulation of the cable; I therefore urged that cold water should be poured over it. This was not effected without strong opposition on the part of the incredulous; but when at last the water of the Thames, which was covered at the time with floating ice, was pumped over the cable, it flowed there-

from at the temperature of 78 degrees; thus proving the general correctness of the electrical indications previously observed.'

Mr Siemens continues: 'In consequence of this practical test, the government consented to the construction within the ship's hold of water-tight iron tanks, and also to the cable being submerged in water during its passage from the works to its destination; precautions which have ever since been adopted in laying submarine cables.'

In a paper on the best mining machinery, published by the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, attention is called to the enormous waste of water always going on in the mining districts of Cornwall, and a suggestion is made that 'a scheme might be introduced whereby large areas might be cheaply constructed into reservoirs, and the drainage of the hills, water pumped from shafts, and waste from machines, would be collected, and let to parties employing machinery for crushing and dressing.' It is further shewn that on the open moors and downs of Cornwall, where breezes are always blowing, there is a great waste of wind. We are so accustomed to steam in this country, that we are apt to forget that the power of wind or of water is available for many purposes in which steam is employed. In Holland, as is well known, a prodigious amount of work is done by wind: some of the windmills are of a hundred horsepower; and similar mills might be employed with advantage in many mining operations in Cornwall.

The same Society have published a description of Andre's Hydraulic Mining Pump, which pump can be used for raising water from deep mines without the cumbrous appliances now in use. Water is stored in an accumulator at the surface: two pipes leading therefrom are fixed against the sides of the shaft, where they occupy no useful space, and by these the working-power is transmitted to the bottom of the mine. Provided sharp bends are avoided, these 'pressure-pipes' may be placed at any angle, and the direction may be changed as often as is required, which is a merit of great importance. The pressure is applied at the surface by means of plungers, which are worked by an ordinary steam-engine; and the whole arrangement may be regarded as an additional instance of the advantages arising from the use of water-power transmitted to long distances. We are informed that the loss of power by this method is very small, that a great saving of coal in the feeding of the steam-engine is effected, and that, as the pump is double, it utilises the whole power of a water-wheel.

The sand-blast, which we have mentioned more than once, grows more and more into use, as fresh applications of its capabilities are discovered. It can be used for all kinds of stone cutting and carving, for inscriptions, for engraving on glass, for cutting or cleaning metal. It comes in aid of the fine arts, and is the best thing that can be used for the prosy operation of cleaning down a dirty house-front. If a photographic picture on gelatine be laid on glass, a carefully regulated sand-blast will act upon the glass beneath the film more or less powerfully in proportion to the thickness of the film; and the half-tones, or gradations of light and shade, are thus produced on the glass. And in the matter of the house-front, the blast instantaneously removes soot or dust from all crevices and indentations, without in any way perceptibly

interfering with the sharpness of the architectural ornamentation.

Mr Lowthian Bell, F.R.S., has published in a separate form his *Notes of a Visit to Coal and Iron Mines and Iron Works in the United States*, which is well worth reading by all interested in industrial progress, and has especial value for those engaged, in any part of the world, in the working of iron. It is a small book filled with most important details.

An attempt has been made to introduce into this country the kind of dwelling-house known in India as a bungalow. For summer residence by the sea-side it offers advantages in which the ordinary dwelling-house is deficient; it is simple in shape, is usually not more than one story high, and is covered by a simple low-pitched roof, which may be prolonged to form a verandah. With this protection the inmates may pass most of their time in the open air, and thus have the fullest benefit of their sojourn by the sea. Visitors to the Isle of Thanet may now see a few bungalows, which, as we are informed, in a paper read before the Institute of British Architects, 'can be worked and kept clean with a very small amount of labour, as many contrivances to diminish servants' work have been introduced.' To keep out the damp, to which houses by the sea-side are so liable, two thin walls are built, with a space of about three inches between them. In the centre of this space a close screen of slate is fitted, and all the moisture blown through the outer wall is stopped by this screen, and trickles down to the bottom. The inner wall consequently remains quite dry, for the moisture does not blow through the slate, and the bungalow is habitable whatever the weather. Any one interested in the subject may see bungalows at Westgate and at Birchington. The builder is Mr John Taylor, whose ingenious building contrivances have long been known.

Two noteworthy books have been published. In *Queen Mary* the Poet-laureate shews that he has not lost his poetic fire, and that in combination therewith he holds a large amount of dramatic force. Apart from its merits in the purely intellectual point of view, it has powerful claims to recognition by reason of the effect it may have in warning readers against certain unwise religious tendencies which have of late years prevailed. The other book, the work of a philosopher, is *Insectivorous Plants*, by Charles Darwin, F.R.S., in which the peculiarities of the common sun-dew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) and plants of similar habit are described, and reasoned upon with rare skill, patience, and sagacity. The *Drosera* grows on barren swampy soil, and has but scanty roots, and would perhaps die out did it not take animal food. A short paragraph may suffice as a specimen of descriptiveness. 'A plant of *Drosera*,' says Mr Darwin, 'with the edges of its leaves curled inwards, so as to form a temporary stomach, with the glands of the closely inflected tentacles pouring forth their acid secretion, which dissolves animal matter, afterwards to be absorbed, may be said to feed like an animal. But, differently from an animal, it drinks by means of its roots; and it must drink largely, so as to retain many drops of viscid fluid round the glands, sometimes as many as two hundred and sixty, exposed during the whole day to a glaring sun.'

FLYING HOURS.

From morn's first flush to the twilight gray,
Ever they hold on their silent way;
Through the flower-lit dawn of the dewy spring
Onward they pass with undrooping wing,
And summer leafage, and autumn showers,
Behold the flight of the changing Hours:
Swift birds of passage on pinions free
Crossing Life's restless sea.

The shade on the dial journeys round,
The steeples utter their warning sound,
And still with the march of their viewless feet,
Bearing to mortals their burden meet,
Of cloud or of sunshine, mirth or woe,
In their long processions come and go
The Hours, like a hastening pilgrim band
Bound for an unknown land.

To the worn and weary hearts of some,
With a sad and lingering step they come,
And the mournful print of their track is left
In perished hopes and affections reft;
And some with a gentle footfall pass,
Like mild spring rain upon budding grass,
Joy-lumined Hours all sweet and rife
With the morning bloom of life.

Oh, little we reck, as one by one
Smiling they rise, and are straightway gone!
Softly as melts the dew-drop crown
From the crest of the foamy thistle-down;
But when with their freight of love and light
Far away from our beaming sight,
They have floated down Time's rushing stream,
How bright, how fair they seem!

Oh, watch we now in the day of grace,
Lest, when we have run our earthly race,
When our souls in the shadow of death shall lie
On the awful verge of eternity,
Life's Hours should stand, an accusing band,
With the record dread in each phantom hand,
Of wasted talents, brave vows unkept,
And daily sin unwept!

On Saturday, August 7, 1875, will be commenced, in this JOURNAL, a NOVEL, entitled

THE FLAG OF DISTRESS.

By Captain MAYNE REID.

To be continued weekly till finished.

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1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. To insure the return of papers that may prove illegible, postage-stamps should in every case accompany them.

3d. All MSS. should bear the author's full CHRISTIAN name, surname, and address, legibly written.

4th. MSS. should be written on one side of the leaf only.

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